

Lying media shape Hiroshima 'debate'

by Paul Goldstein

On the 50th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Japan, the U.S. electronic and print media have engaged in a propaganda campaign to justify the decision of President Harry Truman to drop the bomb. During the last several weeks, every major newspaper and television and radio show has extensively covered this historic event. With a few exceptions, all of the coverage has been heavily weighted toward guiding the audiences into again accepting, after 50 years, the idea that the atomic bomb's use was a military necessity. Opposition to dropping "The Bomb" was characterized by Washington Beltway pundits and TV commentators as coming from a group of politically correct "revisionist historians," who see the decision to use atomic weapons as the beginning of the Cold War.

The media circus is a "chaos game" aimed at manipulating a passive audience into accepting one of two choices—support for or opposition to "The Bomb"—with the truth buried by the emotional rubble. This propaganda blitz, which began a full year ago when the Smithsonian Institution launched an exhibition on the Enola Gay, is a construct, designed to look like a debate on "Why the Bomb Was Dropped," but never leading its victims to a proper understanding of what happened.

Gangs and countergangs

From the very inception of the exhibition, veterans groups protested the Smithsonian's display, claiming it was based on present-day judgments of political correctness, portraying the "Japanese as victims" of the U.S. decision to drop the bomb, while ignoring Japanese atrocities against American POWs. As we write today, most veterans organizations are still decrying the "liberal media" for giving too much ground to "revisionist historians" and supporting the "revisionist" argument that it was not necessary to drop "The Bomb."

In the meantime, New Left British asset Gar Alperovitz was leading "the opposition," the "revisionist historians." His recently published book *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb: And the Architecture of an American Myth* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1995) tries to show that Japan was already defeated and that dropping the bomb was unnecessary. Alperovitz reports accurately that even the U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey had predicted a Japanese collapse before the scheduled November 1945 invasion of Japan.

To keep this so-called debate going, the military and intelligence community establishment trotted out one prominent historian, Russell F. Weigley, Distinguished University Professor at Temple University, to refute Alperovitz's claim that Japan was about to collapse militarily. Weigley also chastised Alperovitz for not properly considering the intelligence reports from top-secret MAGIC and ULTRA intercepts, which purportedly show that the Japanese government was in the hands of hard-line militarists committed to fighting to the last man.

Reinforcing this "institutional" view is an article that appeared in the July 31 issue of *U.S. News and World Report*, which asserts that "Japan was beaten, but unbowed. Its Navy was mostly beneath the waves, its Air Force smashed, its cities battered. Yet Allied intercepts of communications revealed that the militarists in charge in Tokyo were bent on vindicating their honor and that of their emperor through a bloody, bitter-end defense of the home islands."

Since the "controversy" of the Smithsonian's Enola Gay exhibition, the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* belatedly joined "the debate" on the impact of the dropping of "The Bomb." In all their articles, there was not a hint of the real reason for dropping the bomb. A lead editorial in the Aug. 6 *New York Times*, "Hiroshima, 50 Years Later," went to great lengths to whitewash the role of Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson, attempting to lend credibility to the idea that Stimson was one inner circle figure who sought to "modify the unconditional surrender policy so that Emperor Hirohito could remain on the Japanese throne."

The July 24 cover story in *Newsweek* (which is owned by the *Washington Post*), titled "Hiroshima: August 6, 1945: Why We Did It," also portrayed Stimson as one of Truman's advisers with doubts about dropping the bomb. Evan Thomas, the author of the article and apologist for the liberal establishment, wrote, "The only voice agitating for a political solution belonged to Henry Stimson and his view was edged in doubt."

Self-serving diaries penned by Stimson and used by Thomas, Alperovitz, and other authors, purport to show Stimson's reluctance. One account has Stimson protesting the idea of dropping the bomb on Kyoto and being upset about Gen. Curtis LeMay's firebombing strategy against Tokyo, which killed 150,000 Japanese in a ten-day period in March 1945.

While some of the diary's entries express a half-truth, Stimson had a notorious penchant for lying. Not only did he approve an article written by his Skull and Bones Society protégé, McGeorge Bundy, in a 1947 issue of *Reader's Digest*, titled "We Saved a Million Lives by Dropping the Bomb," but he was one of the main figures involved in covering up the so-called "intelligence failure": the Japanese surprise attack at Pearl Harbor.

Television coverage also tried to give the appearance of a full-scale debate. ABC's "Nightline" used a compelling



Visitors inspect the fuselage of the plane that dropped the atomic bomb over Hiroshima. An exhibition on the Enola Gay at the Smithsonian Institution began the current propaganda campaign on "Why the Bomb Was Dropped."

and emotional piece on how the bomb saved the lives of American and Allied prisoners of war. CBS's "48 Hours" had a broadcast with Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf (ret.) and anchor Dan Rather, going through a detailed military history of the battles in the Pacific leading to the bombing of Hiroshima. *U.S. News and World Report's* July 31 issue, "50 Years Later: Hiroshima, The Aftershocks," displayed a military map detailing how the United States was going to invade Japan. Entitled "The Domsday Scenario Truman Averted," it states, "The bloodbath was avoided when the atomic bomb forced Japan to surrender."

The key myths

Ironically, one of the central issues for which the bomb was dropped is barely mentioned in all this coverage: Bertrand Russell's agenda for world government. Only *U.S. News and World Report* covered the fact that leading writers, politicians, and scientists in 1945 were clamoring for a "world government." "Max Lerner, Dorothy Thompson, E.B. White, and a number of scientists joined a boomlet for world government. . . . Even the conservative *Reader's Digest* printed an article declaring, the 'atomic bomb has made political and economic nationalism meaningless,'" reported the magazine. Albert Einstein was mentioned in passing as being "behind the cause of world government."

The myth that dropping the atomic bomb was a military necessity continues to receive the greatest coverage, because the aim of its perpetrators was to force all governments to sacrifice their sovereignty and surrender to a "world govern-

ment system." Even the lying Stimson reveals in a slightly disguised form his underlying assumptions, when he recounted in his diary that dropping the bomb "may destroy or perfect International Civilization. . . . The weapon could be a means for World Peace, or it may be a Frankenstein." The notion of "World Peace" was a code-phrase for oligarchical "world government."

Another key myth was that the American military establishment adoringly supported the bombing. In reality, a sizeable faction opposed the policy. Gen. Dwight Eisenhower, along with FDR's Chief of Staff Admiral Leahy, voiced consistent opposition. An assistant secretary of the Navy resigned in protest over the bombing. In fact, the Navy in general wanted to blockade Japan into submission, and opposed a full-scale invasion. Even though Gen. Douglas MacArthur drew up the invasion plan "Operation Olympic and Operation Coronet," he viewed it with great trepidation. It is not generally known, but MacArthur viewed the Marine assault and subsequent slaughter at Iwo Jima and Okinawa as incompetent and unnecessary. Iwo Jima and Okinawa were seen as the prelude to a U.S. invasion of Japan, and shaped the projections of casualties which were used to justify the bombing. The Army, Air Force, and ground forces generally supported dropping the bomb.

Perhaps the single most important myth is that the "militarist" faction was in control of Japan and would continue the war, and that the peace faction was only a small group of "civilians," mainly in the Foreign Ministry. However, the U.S. command knew from the MAGIC intercepts that the

emperor wanted to pursue peace. "It is His Majesty's heart's desire to see the swift termination of the war," read a MAGIC cable. Moreover, as Lyndon LaRouche has pointed out, British intelligence sought, at all costs, the sabotage of the Vatican-Japanese peace negotiations. British asset Allen Dulles, then head of OSS Germany, and the scoundrel James Jesus Angelton, with backing from the highest levels of British intelligence, the "Double Cross Committee" (XX/C), operated a clever stratagem designed to pull the rug out from under these sensitive negotiations, by discrediting the "Vessel Operation." The Vessel Affair is dismissed by every historian as a fraud.

However, Vessel was not just a putative Vatican source, but a well-organized network within the Vatican, operating under the direction of Giovanni Montini, which conducted negotiations between the Vatican and the Japanese with the full knowledge of President Roosevelt and the emperor of Japan. During the 1944-45 interval of relevance to Operation Vessel, Montini was an acting secretary of Pope Pius XII's Secretariat of State of the Vatican, responsible for non-diplomatic affairs, although actually dealing with Japan diplomats in connection with the Vessel Affair.

Moreover, the Japanese "Peace Faction" was not just a bunch of bureaucrats inside the Foreign Ministry, but included leading members of the Navy establishment, which historically had opposed the Army—a fact well known to U.S. intelligence. Although all the relevant documents have yet to be declassified, it is clear that the XX/C, which in effect ran OSS's X-2 (counterintelligence and counterespionage), effectively utilized their asset Angleton to discredit the Vessel, ensuring that a Japanese surrender, with the emperor still in power, would never succeed.

The famous May 18, 1945 meeting at the White House with Stimson, Assistant Secretary of War McCloy, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and President Truman, to discuss modifying the unconditional surrender policy which would have permitted the Japanese to keep the emperor, was a clever ploy aimed at duping the President of the United States, the haberdasher Harry Truman. It is now virtually certain that had FDR lived, he would have ended the war with Japan through the Vessel negotiations.

Finally, and one of the most explosive myths, is the notion that the supremacy of "air power" won the war in Europe and Japan. Up until the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings, the United States and Britain had conducted massive carpet- and firebombings of civilian areas, aimed at breaking the will of the population to conduct war. Based on the assumptions of this air power doctrine, the British led the bombing of the cultural center of Dresden, Germany, while the United States carried out the firebombing of Tokyo, which cost the lives of over 100,000 to each city. These actions were touted as the hallmark of the doctrine of air power. In both cases, as all intelligence reports at that time indicated, these so-called strategic bombings failed to ac-



President Harry Truman: His decision to drop the atomic bomb was viewed by the "air power" utopians as a vindication of their doctrine.

complish their intended aim.

In fact, until the dropping of the atomic bombs, the air power "utopians" were churning out psychological warfare propaganda extolling the great success of "strategic bombing." When the decision was made by Truman to drop the bomb, it was viewed by the air power utopians as not only a continuation of their doctrine, but its complete vindication.

The Army Air Corps, later the Air Force, promulgated this air power doctrine, in which atomic weapons became the supreme power in warfare, thereby virtually eliminating the need for ground forces to occupy and control enemy territory. Later on, this became the justification for the British-inspired notion of "Mutual Assured Destruction," arising out of the Strategic Bombing Survey and Army Air Corps. Not only did this strategic doctrine produce the insane ideas of Vietnam-era Defense Secretary Robert McNamara; it was the *raison d'être* for initiating the war in Vietnam, as a "limited" or "cabinet warfare" operation.

As *EIR* has documented over the years, the British intelligence-controlled left-wing peace movement, created by Bertrand Russell, was entirely built in opposition to the use of atomic weapons and of peaceful nuclear power. It is one of the great ironies of history that the very veterans organizations which continue to support the dropping of the bomb are, de facto, whether they realize it or not, supporting the historical creation and continued existence of the left-wing pacifist and radical anti-nuclear organizations.